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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/501,796	02/08/2000	Norm D. Schlaegel	A-68724/AJT	4387

7590

06/03/2002

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EXAMINER

DABNEY, PHYLESHA LARVINIA

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2643

5

DATE MAILED: 06/03/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/501,796

Applicant(s)

SCHLAEGEL, NORM D.

Examiner

Phylesha L Dabney

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 March 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This action is in response to the amendment filed on 25 March 2002 in which claims 1-15 are pending. Applicant's arguments have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-4, and 14-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over G.W. French (U.S. Patent No. 2,573,132), in view of Antle (U.S. Patent No. 4,499,593).

1. Regarding claim 1, French '132 discloses an electro-acoustic system comprising: a fitted earmold (1) having a sound-conduction bore (7); a sound-conduction tube (2, 8) having a passage; and a speaker (14). French '132 inherently teaches an electrical cable (14'), since French '132 (col. 1 lines 5-15) is an improvement over French (U.S. Patent No. 2,545,731) and French '731 teaches a cord (2). French '132 does not teach an electrical plug connected to the other end of the electrical cable for electrical connection to an electrical sound-generating member. Antle teaches a type of electrical plug (44, 46, 48) attached to an electrical cable (38) for insertion into a sound producing system (col. 4 lines 40-45). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to attach the electrical plug of Antle to the electrical cable of French '132 for insertion into a sound producing system.

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2. Regarding claim 2, French '132 teaches the speaker coupled to the sound conduction tube (8) by a housing (12-14).

3. Regarding claim 3, French '132 teaches a connector (2) having an inner end and an outer end.

4. Regarding claim 4, as shown in fig. 2, French '132 teaches the bore (7) having an entry section and exit section.

5. Regarding claim 14, Neither French '132 nor French (U.S. Patent No. 2,545,731) teach the specifics of the electrical cable used; however, it is extremely well-known in the art to use coiled electrical cables because they are less cumbersome. In addition, Antle teaches a type of electrical cable having a coiled section (38) for use with a sound producing system. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a coiled cable such as the one disclosed by Antle in the invention of French '132 for transferring electrical signals.

6. Regarding claim 15, Antle teaches an electrical cable (38) having an electrical connector (40) attached thereto

Claims 5-10, and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over G.W. French (U.S. Patent No. 2,573,132), in view of Antle (U.S. Patent No. 4,499,593), and in further view of Schlaegel et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,753,870).

7. Regarding claim 5, the combination of French '132 and Antle does not teach the specific structure of the earmold or connecting tube. Schlaegel teaches a specific structure for an earmold including a seating member (12a, 12b) as a means for securing a specific type of connecting tube (18). Since French '132 does not suggest or exclude any type of earmold

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structure, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the earmold structure of Schlaegel including a seating member could have been used in the combination of French `132 and Antle as a means of securing the specific type of connecting tube presented by Schlaegel inside the earmold.

8. Regarding claims 6-7, Schlaegel teaches the specific type of connector (18) including an elbow configuration (fig. 3) and includes a tubing-receiving section (24), a latching section (22, 32, 34), and a passage (30).

9. Regarding claim 8, the combination of French `132 and Antle does not specifically teach the diameter of the conduction tubing, passage, or exit section of the bore as being the same. Schlaegel teaches maintaining the diameter of the conduction tubing, passage, and exit section the same (¶ col. 2 lines 56-60 and col. 3 lines 10-12). Since the combination of French `132 and Antle does not suggest or exclude any diameter for the electro-acoustic system, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that keeping the diameter of the tubing, passage, and exit section the same as taught by Schlaegel could have been used in the combination of French `132 and Antle as a means of acoustic characteristics of the system.

10. Regarding claim 9, Schlaegel teaches a filter (40) disposed in the tubing-receiving section (24).

11. Regarding claim 10, Schlaegel teaches the tubing receiving section (24) having a shoulder (28).

12. Regarding claim 12, Schlaegel teaches the latching section (22, 32, 34) has an annular recess and an annular barb (32).

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13. Regarding claim 13, Schlaegel teaches a space (12b) provided in the entry section, and a nubbin (22) is disposed within the space.

Claims 5 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over G.W. French (U.S. Patent No. 2,573,132), in view of Antle (U.S. Patent No. 4,499,593), and in further view of Major (U. S. Patent No. 5,488,205).

14. Regarding claim 5, the combination of French '132 and Antle does not teach the specific structure of the earmold or connecting tube. Major teaches a specific structure of: an earmold including a seating member (24) as a means for securing a specific type of connecting tube (12). Since the combination of French '132 and Antle does not suggest or exclude any type of earmold structure, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the earmold structure of Major including a seating member could have been used in the combination of French '132 and Antle as a means of securing the specific type of connecting tube presented by Major inside the earmold.

15. Regarding claim 11, as shown in figs. 1-4, Major teaches the seating member (24) having an annular section (figures 1-4, and col. 3 lines 50-51) and an annular shoulder (27).

### ***Response to Arguments***

16. With regard to the arguments on page 3 pertaining to claim 1: The examiner disagrees with the applicant's statement that French does not teach a fitted earmold as defined by the applicant to merely be able to fit within a user's ear (pg. 2, lines 1-8; pg. 3, lines 6-9; pg. 5 lines 3-5). French '132 clearly teaches and shows an earmold capable of being fitted into a user's ear. With respect to the passage cited by the applicant (French '132, col. 1 lines 16-19):

*“a device which is constructed... the earpiece does not have to be specially designed to the user's ear, the device being constructed that it will be ... retained... and... readily removed or inserted therein.”*

As understood by the examiner in this passage, French specifically teaches and shows in figures 1 and 2 an earmold that fits into the user's ear which satisfies the claimed limitation as supported by definition of “fitted earmold” contained in the applicant's specification.

### ***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phylesha L Dabney whose telephone number is 703-306-5415. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays 8:30-5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis Kuntz can be reached on 703-305-4708. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9314 for regular communications and 703-872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-4700.

**Any response to this action should be mailed to:**


Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**Or faxed to:**

(703) 872-9314, for formal communications intended for entry and for informal or draft communications, please label "Proposed" or "Draft" when submitting an informal amendment.

(703) 306-0377, for customer service questions.

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

PLD  
  
May 23, 2002

  
CURTIS KUNTZ  
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